This course will introduce students to the prose of Cicero, one of the most influential writers in Roman history and literature, as well as a foundational figure for the later history of Western Europe and America. We will read selections from Cicero’s oratory as well as from his political writings, focusing particularly on his oration Pro Archia poeta, and on the concluding section of his dialogue, De republica, a philosophical speculation known in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance as the Dream of Scipio. These texts open a window onto Cicero’s cultural and literary world, his rise to political prominence at the end of the Roman Republic, and his understanding of Rome’s place in the larger world. The majority of the reading will be done in Latin, with some supplementary Ciceronian texts in English to give context to the works that are the main focus of the class.